

Frank Dixon
123 Barton Road
Stow, MA 01775

Received & Inspected

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FCC Mail Room

December 18, 2013

Re: Prohibit Cell Phones on Planes

Dear Chairman Wheeler and Commissioners Clyburn, Rosenworcel and Pai,

I understand that the FCC is considering allowing cell phone use on airplanes. I would like to voice strong opposition to this. Allowing Internet access and other uses of electronic devices that do not make noise, such as computers and tablets, seems fine. But listening to cell phone calls on planes would be unbearable, highly distracting and very annoying.

I am a frequent business traveler. I often work or sleep on planes. It would be extremely difficult or impossible to do either of these things if a person sitting nearby was talking on a cell phone. Most people on planes do not talk. When they do, conversations usually are quiet. However, people often talk louder on cell phones. Also, cell phones are far more distracting because only one side of the conversation is heard. The mind involuntarily often tries to figure out the other side of the conversation. Cell phone use would increase talking on planes, as well as produce a far more distracting and annoying form of talking. In an airport terminal or other location, people can move if someone on a cell phone is distracting them. But people on planes usually cannot move.

Some passengers loudly discuss the details of their personal lives or other business. It often appears that they are insecure and want other people to know how important they are. Everything that a stranger says is irrelevant to someone sitting on a plane. Forcing fellow passengers to listen to an extended discussion of a stranger's personal life, especially when it prevents passengers from working or doing something else, is like torture.

Airplanes have been a welcome sanctuary from annoying cell phone calls. I have a hard time understanding how the FCC could even be considering this. I suggest that you give airline passengers a survey. I suspect that the vast majority of passengers, probably over 90%, would strongly oppose allowing cell phone use on planes. But even if many passengers supported it, this is a special case.

In some cases, the majority decides the appropriate action. The minority must tolerate something that they do not like. But in certain cases, if the harm is great, then even minority opposition should block harmful actions. Talking on cell phones would severely degrade the flying experience for many people. It often would make flying intolerable and highly frustrating. Forcing airline passengers to listen to other people's personal conversations is abusive. Therefore, even if some passengers want it, it should be prohibited.

I understand that cell phone use might help some companies to make more money and that these companies probably gave money to politicians who oversee the FCC. But the priority in this democracy is supposed to be doing what's best for the people, not telecommunications and other companies.

Airlines are shrinking seat space and cramming more people onto planes. Adding cell phone use to this declining service quality situation would be the icing on the cake of a horrible flying experience.

I can understand why flight attendants are strongly opposed to cell phone use on planes. People who are trying to work, sleep, read or simply relax often will be unable to do so if someone nearby is talking on a

cell phone. Passengers will complain to flight attendants, who frequently will be unable to do anything. Planes are increasingly full. As a result, people usually will not be able to be reseated so that they are not distracted by cell phone calls. Allowing cell phone use is virtually guaranteed to cause many confrontations and problems on airplanes.

Again, I do not understand why the FCC is even considering this. The only rational explanation is business influence of government. But companies do not have a right to earn a profit if it harms many passengers by preventing them from working, sleeping, reading or relaxing. The FCC is supposed to protect passengers and the public in general. Please do this.

Allowing people to send texts and emails greatly reduces the need for annoying cell phone calls during flights. Please use common sense and put passengers first by prohibiting cell phone use on planes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank Dief". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "F" and a long, sweeping underline.